

Bradford Reporter

WEDNESDAY,

Regardless of Denunciation from any Quarter.—Gov. POSTER.

(BY E. S. GOODRICH & SON.)

TOWANDA, BRADFORD COUNTY, PA., JULY 17, 1844.

NO. 3.

The Coalition of 1825; OR Bargain with John Quincy Adams.

which the latter, in defiance of the will of the people, was made President of the United States, and who had been corruptedly secured to himself the office of Secretary of State.

Twenty years have now elapsed since he was first an unsuccessful candidate for this same office, and his defeat and disappointments were sufficiently evident that with the American people, his unfitness for the station is no longer a subject of debate. But that act of his life, which has been rightly considered of a more damning character than any other, is one to which we justly call your especial attention.

Entering upon a detailed exposition of that foul transaction, we do but ourselves of a right which belongs to every man who asks us for justice. We shall endeavor to give you a history with perfect fairness and accuracy. We have ever been taught, we most sincerely believe, that no man can be of any use in a free country before a free people. If we err in a single statement, the error will not only be unintentional, but will not be in spite of our most anxious precaution. All important facts are stated with the utmost particularity. We will give names, times and places, and all our quotations shall be from the most authentic sources. We follow citizens, to lay nothing on your which will not safely bear your severest scrutiny. May we therefore fairly solicit, and confidently expect, the candid attention of the honest man into whose hands this paper may fall, no matter what may have been his previous political bias?

The charge against Mr. Clay, in the negotiation of which we now wish to join, is briefly this: He, while the election for President was before the House of Representatives, in the winter of 1824-5, being a representative from Kentucky, Speaker of the House, entered into a corrupt coalition with John Q. Adams, to whom he had previously been personally and politically opposed, in violation of the will of the people of the State of Kentucky and of the United States, and also in direct opposition to his own professed principles, as Adams President of the United States, and Adams, in return, made him Secretary of State and placed him what he afterwards termed "the line of precedents" for elevation to the Presidency—or, to state it still more fully, that, so far as in him lay—

the Jeffersonian administration. So managing as to make the republican party believe him sincere, he was taken into favor, became the recipient of their bounty, and, at the time of which we speak, was President Monroe's Secretary of State. He had, however, so cultivated the good will of his old associates, that the great majority of republicans became distrustful of him; and in the same letter, just quoted, Mr. Jefferson, speaking of him as "the northmost candidate," declared that he would "get every federal vote in the Union." It should here be remarked that, when Mr. Jefferson said that the federalists had changed their name, he added, "but the name alone is changed, the principles are the same."

The republicanism of Jackson and Crawford had never been distrusted. Mr. Clay had many splendid qualities, and had been of some service to the republican cause. In 1811 he had made an eloquent and unanswerable argument against a national bank, and he had given a vigorous support to the war. Still, he had not gained the confidence of the people. His abilities were deemed more showy than solid, and, in some instances, he had exhibited an overweening ambition, and an ungenerous jealousy of those supposed to stand in his way. Thomas M. Randolph, the son-in-law and the intimate friend of Thomas Jefferson, has given us Mr. Jefferson's opinion of Mr. Clay, in these words:

"Towards Mr. Clay, as a politician, Mr. Jefferson constantly manifested a very strong repugnance, and often said that he was merely a splendid orator, without any valuable knowledge from experience or study, or any determined public principles founded in sound political science, either practical or theoretical."—See *Niles' Register*, vol. 33, p. 21.

Mr. Clay's relations towards Jackson and Crawford. In his speech on the Seminole war, in 1818, Mr. Clay expressed his high respect for General Jackson in the following words:

"Towards that distinguished Captain, who shed so much glory on our country, whose renown constitutes so great a portion of its moral property, I never had, I never can have, any other feelings than those of the most profound respect and of the utmost kindness."—See *Mallory's edition of Clay's Speeches*, 1, p. 365.

of November, 1822, in which, after declaring that Mr. Adams had made erroneous statements, both of fact and opinion, in regard to the transactions at Ghent, he says:

"I WILL, at some future period, more propitious than the present to calm and dispassionate consideration, and when there can be no misinterpretation of motives, lay before the public a narrative of those transactions, as I understood them."

This was published in the *National Intelligencer*, at Washington, on the 17th of December, 1822. On the 18th of December, the very next day, Mr. Adams sent to the *Intelligencer* a reply to Clay, beginning with a sneering allusion to "a note from Mr. Clay," instead of the *Honorable Henry Clay*, and ending with the following keenly-pointed paragraph:

"But, as by the adjournment of that publication to a period 'more propitious than the present to calm and dispassionate consideration, and when there can be no misinterpretation of motives, it may chance to be postponed until both of us shall have been summoned to account for all our errors, before a higher tribunal than that of our country, I feel myself now called upon to say, that let the appropriate dispositions, when and how they will, expose the open day and secret night of the transactions at Ghent, the statements both of fact and opinion, in the papers which I have written and published, in relation to this controversy, will, in every particular, essential or important to the interests of the nation, or to the character of Mr. Clay, be found to abide unshaken, the test of human scrutiny, of talents, and of time."

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS. This is the affair usually referred to as "the adjourned question of veracity." For the sake of the coalition, Clay has pocketed a gross insult, his veracity is still in dispute, and as Adams tauntingly insinuated, the question will continue "to be postponed" until they shall have been summoned before the tribunal of another world.

thing dishonorable and base in a public man. Mr. Adams was denounced in it as "an artful sophist, a clumsy negotiator," and possessing "views too erroneous, feelings too sectional, and temper too vindictive for the chief magistrate of a free people!"

For printing this pamphlet, Mr. Clay paid to Mr. Tanner, of Lexington Ky., the sum of one hundred dollars, as was proven by Mr. Tanner's own testimony before the Legislature of Ky. in 1828. He was also personally active in the circulation of it, as is proven by the following letter to its author, a part of which we have before quoted:

"Dear Sir.—Several inquiries have been made about your pamphlet on the fisheries, by members of Congress, and I have promised to request a copy to be sent to Mr. David Sloane, here. Will you be good enough to have them forwarded?"

There is an effort making to get up a caucus. I doubt its success. Mr. Adams is weaker to the north than I supposed him to be, if one is to judge from what he hears at this place. My prospects are very good.

Yours with great esteem,
H. CLAY.
Washington, 17th December.

candidates, Jackson having 99 electoral votes, and being the highest, Adams 84, Crawford 41, and Clay had 37. Jackson had the votes of 11 States, Adams, of 7; Crawford, of 3, and Clay, of 3. The three States which voted for Mr. Clay, were Kentucky, Ohio, and Missouri. Had Mr. Clay declined the canvass, and left them to have made their own choice between Jackson and Adams, it is undeniable that Jackson would have received an almost unanimous vote in each of them, and thereby been elected by the people.

The Popular Expectation. Such being the state of things when Congress met in December, 1824, it was the universal belief that the choice of the House would fall upon Gen. Jackson. Mr. Crawford was virtually out of the contest by reason of sickness, and the issue was between Jackson and Adams. It was true that Mr. Clay and his friends held the balance of power, he being a member of the House and its Speaker. It was known, however, that Jackson was the choice of every Western State, and that, had Clay's name been withdrawn, he would have been elected by the people. It was known that Mr. Clay had long entertained hostile feelings towards Mr. Adams, and that the latter, as Jefferson had predicted, had rallied around him the New England Federalists. When before the people, Mr. Adams had received the vote of but one State out of New England. The representatives from Illinois and Missouri were solemnly pledged to support Jackson; and hardly a voice was to be found for Adams in Ohio or Kentucky.

No man believed it possible that Mr. Clay could vote for a candidate who had received the votes of only 7 States, against one who had received the votes of 11 States. No man believed that he could vote for an apostate federalist, against a uniform republican. No man believed that he could vote for a man whom he himself had helped make odious to the people, against a man acknowledged to be the favorite of the people. No man believed that he could vote for an eastern man whom he had charged with hostility to the west against a western man who had periled his life for the west. No man believed that he could vote for his political and personal enemy, against one with whom he had charged with almost every thing base, dishonorable and traitorous; against him whom he had often lauded, as the brave, magnanimous and patriotic defender of New Orleans. No man believed that he could vote for John Quincy Adams, against Andrew Jackson—because, no man knew how readily he could sacrifice his honor, his principles, and his fame to the unhallowed shrine of ambition!

Mysterious Reserve of Mr. Clay. The circumstance which induced a distrust of Mr. Clay, was the profound silence which he and his intimate friends preserved in regard to their intentions. This was in exact accordance with the advice which he gave his friends, as we have already shown before the election. Although this silence immediately attracted the attention of the public, it was long before the secret purpose of it was fully understood. Men were unwilling to believe that treachery, so base, was contemplated by one who stood so high in the Republican party. Subsequent events enlightened the public mind, and the question was asked, with withering power, "Why did Clay preserve so strict a silence in regard to his intentions as to the Presidential election, if it was not that he was engaged in that very intrigue and bargain, and corruption, afterwards charged upon him?" In his "address to his constituents," shortly after the election by the house, he would have the public believe, that his suppression of his opinions, was from his regard to "delicacy and decorum;"—he who before, had ever been proud of the frankness and perfect unreserve which was characteristic of the men of the west! "Vain excuse!" His whole subsequent life gives the lie to his pretence of "delicacy and decorum." He certainly could not have desired time to form his opinions as to the relative merits of the two candidates. He had long known them, and it would have been passing strange for him to have remained undecided, upon a question, on which the very humblest man in the land had long since made up his mind.

The Result before the People. Mr. Clay was the lowest of the four

The Instructions of Clay's Constituents. Congress had been but a few weeks in session, when the delegation from Kentucky received instructions from the Legislature of their state, which, it was supposed at the time, would render their vote absolutely certain for General Jackson. Mr. Clay had always professed the doctrine that the representatives should obey the will of his constituents. The following is an extract from a speech made in Congress by Clay, in January, 1817, and published in the *National Intelligencer* of that date:

"Whilst, then, he had a seat on this floor, Mr. C. said, it was immaterial how he arrived at the will of his constituents or what were the evidences of it, it was sufficient that he should know it. In all cases of expediency, he held the doctrine of an obligation on his part to observe the instructions, expressed or implied, of his constituents."

The following were the resolutions which were adopted by the legislature of Kentucky:

"Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Kentucky, That the members of the House of Representatives in the Congress of the United States from this state be requested to vote for General Jackson as President of the United States.

Resolved as the opinion of this Legislature, That Gen. Andrew Jackson is the second choice of the state of Kentucky for the next President of the United States; that a very large majority of the people of this state prefer Gen. Andrew Jackson to Mr. Adams or Mr. Crawford; and that the members of the House of Representatives in Congress of the United States will, by complying with the request herein signified, faithfully and truly represent the feelings and wishes of the good people of Kentucky."—See *Niles' Register*, vol. 27, page 231.

These resolutions passed the Kentucky Legislature by a vote of 91 out of 114 members, some of the few who voted against them declaring that they did so, not because they were in favor of Mr. Adams, but because they deemed the interference of the legislature unnecessary. Thus said an eloquent opponent of the Adams dynasty, was Clay's obligation to vote against Mr. Adams completed. It was a triple cord, composed of honor, principle, and duty—honor in relation to his own declarations, and those of his friends, especially in Ohio, and duty in relation to his Kentucky. Yet was this triple cord snapped asunder.

As an excuse for this disregard of the will of Kentucky, Mr. Clay afterwards set up the pretence that his constituents were merely the voters of his own Congressional district, and that he owned no allegiance to the mass of people of the State. But this excuse is most too frivolous to be worthy of notice, because, in giving the vote of Kentucky in the election of a President by the House, he was in fact the representative of the entire State, and not a fraction of the State.

Rumors of Clay's Treachery. Some rumors of Clay's bargain with Adams began to be circulated about a month before the election. A little while previous, a tale had been started that Jackson had resolved that, in case he should be chosen President, he would make Adams his Secretary of State. This was undoubtedly done by Mr. Clay's friends, for the purpose of sounding Gen. Jackson as to Mr. Clay. Mr. Buchanan, of Pa., called on Gen. Jackson and interrogated him as to the truth of his tale. He received from the General this characteristic answer:

"That these were secrets he would keep to himself—he would conceal them from the very hairs of his head. That if he believed his right hand then knew what his left would do, upon the subject of appointments to office, he would cut it off and cast it into the fire. That if he should ever be elected President, it would be without solicitation and without intrigue on his part."—See *Buchanan's Letter*, *Niles' Register*, vol. 32, p. 416.

Several of Mr. Clay's friends had not hesitated to proclaim, that they meant to make use of the balance of power to control the arrangements of the new administration, and when they were informed of Jackson's determination not to bargain for the Presidency, they doubtless turned their attention exclusively to Adams. In him they chanced to find a more congenial spirit.

Letter to the "Columbian Observer." Towards the last of January, that which men at first deemed founded solely upon idle rumors, too monstrous for belief, began to bear the sober aspect of truth and certainty. On the 27th of January, the following startling letter, purporting to have been written by a member of Congress, was published in the "Columbian Observer," at Philadelphia:

[SEE FOURTH PAGE.]